



FRESH POSIES

BY

ABBIE
FARWELL BROWN



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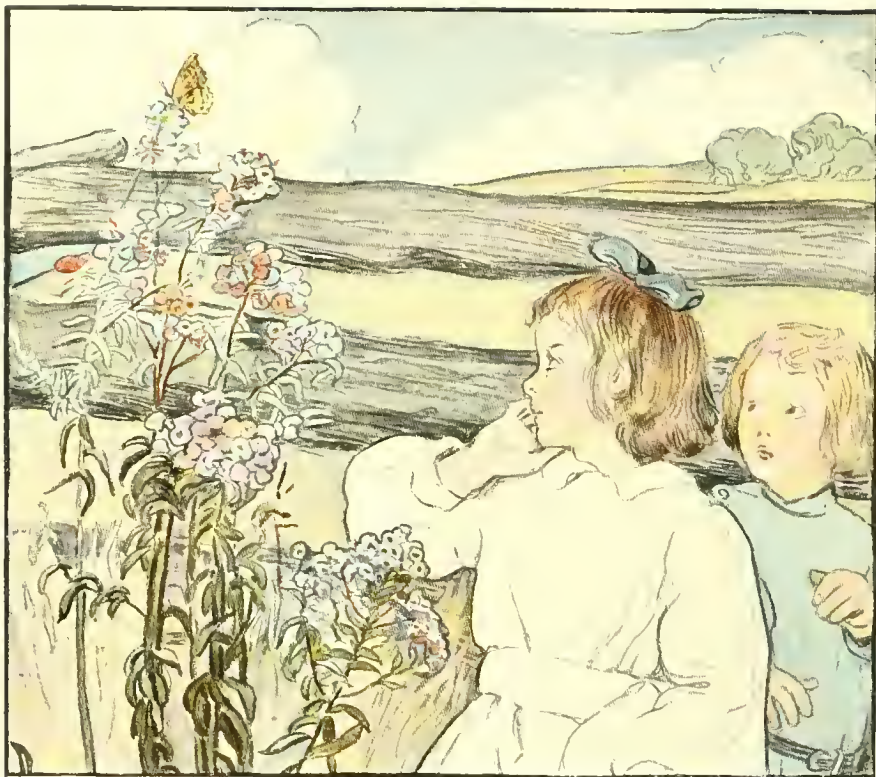
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BOSTON AND NEW YORK



FRESH POSIES





FRESH POSIES

RHYMES TO READ AND
PIECES TO SPEAK BY

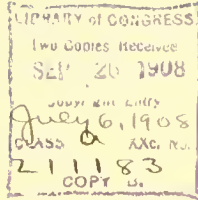
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BOSTON AND NEW YORK
HOUGHTON MIFFLIN COMPANY

1908



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Published October 1908

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A. 20 Dec 20/12

TO MY SISTER



FOR courteous permission to reprint various verses in this volume thanks are due to the publishers of the *Century Magazine*, *Harper's Magazine*, *The Youth's Companion*, *Woman's Home Companion*, *The Churchman*, *The Congregationalist*, *The Christian Endeavor World*, *The New England Magazine*, and *Good Housekeeping*; also to Messrs. Ginn and Company, for the permission to include here the group of Songs, originally written for their series of *Music Readers*.



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Grace before Meat

*For all these goodly viands set before me on the table,
I thank Thee, Lord, as heartily and well as I am able.
Oh, bless the food that comes to me, with those who share
and serve it,
And if there be a good dessert, oh, grace me to deserve it.
O Lord, when I am hungry may I never lack for meat,
And make me always hungry when I sit me down to eat.*



This Sorry Scheme of Things



Leaves

How carelessly the Mother Spring
 Must sew the leaves upon the trees!
 For with the tiniest autumn breeze
They all rip off like anything,
And lie about untidily,
A sorry sight for one to see!
 I know if I were Mother Spring
 I'd sew them on with stouter string.



Snow

SNOW-STARS are wonderful and pure,
And very hard to make, I 'm sure.
But care like that I 'd never spend
If I had charge of snow to send.
I 'd make it sugary and sweet,
With flavors children like to eat.
It would be easier, I know,
For me to make ice cream than snow.



Clothes

THE birds and beasts are nice and warm
In feathers and in fur ;
They have no hooks and eyes and strings,
No buttons and such horrid things
To make life hatefuler.

If I could make things as I chose,
I'd give each little boy
A furry coat from top to toe,
And feathers on each girl should grow ;
Then life would be a joy !



Wisdom

WE waste the precious time on books
That might be spent at play,
If only we were born as wise
As we shall be some day !

But when we know our books at last
And we are old and gray,
We 'll only care to sit and think ;
We 'll be too tired to play !



Time

THE clock of time is wrong,
For happy hours are slow
And saddest ones are long, —
What makes it so ?

I wonder, — can it be
That Father Time's asleep?
I wish he'd given me
His key to keep!



Heart's Desire



Flying

OF all the things that one might do,
If wishing hard could make it true,
I'd choose to fly, like "Peter."
Oh, think how thrilling it would be
To feel one's body light and free,
Escaping fleeter, fleeter !

Above the trees, the church-spire too,
Into the fields of misty blue,
I'd float like any swallow.
I would not give my Teacher wings,
My books nor sewing, — serious things.
Oh, no ! They could not follow.



The Languages

I DO not want to learn the tongues
Of people long since dead.
I'd know the living languages
Of beast and bird instead.

Oh, then how happy I should be,
Safe everywhere to roam
Among the pleasant jungle-folk,
And always feel at home !



Aladdin's Lamp

How convenient it would be
For a little girl like me
 To have a Wishing-Lamp, my very own !
I could choose such lovely things,
Dolls and toys and clothes and rings,
 The dearest and the finest ever known.

It would help my parents so,
For they cannot always know, —
 They think their very hardest for my sake.
And Santa Claus beside
Need not trouble to decide,
 For I could Wish, and never make mistake.



Fairy Spelling

I 'VE heard about a Fairy Spell ;
Oh, that 's the kind for me !
I cannot learn the common way,
I spell disgracefully.

I 'd like to meet a Fairy-Child
Beside a magic well.
I 'd beg a fairy spelling-book ;
Then I could learn to spell.



Dolls

My dolls are very good,
Obedient and kind;
No little mother could
Hope better ones to find.
But oh ! So dumb and still they lie.
I wish that they could scream or cry !

My dolls are very sweet,
Some say they look like me;
With dresses nice and neat,
And hair curled prettily.
I'd wish them torn and old to-day,
If they could come alive and play !



A Country Child in the City



The Busy Street

GOD seems so far away
To-day!
At home He is quite near, —
Not here.

One cannot see the sky,
The buildings are so high.
The road, a crack between,
Where people crawl unseen
By God's kind eye.
Hurry and scurry, clang and shout,
Things whirling past and all about —
Now here, now there,

[20]

With no safe Where
For a little child to be.

So many other things for God to see,
How can He notice me?



The Flower Man

THE Flower Man goes bawling by
Through streets all hot and sunny ;
“ Here’s flower plants ! ” you hear him cry ;
The crowded pots are sad and dry,
He sells them all for money !

God is the Flower Man at home.
He makes them, oh, so many !
And leaves them freshly in the grass,
Wherever little children pass, —
We need not pay a penny !



Swan Boats

THERE are no dear small singing-birds
 To build their nests around,
NO darling chickens, ducks, and geese
 Parade about the ground.

But oh ! the Swans are wonderful,
 So big and white and strong.
They pull the children in their boats
 Quite easily along.

The nicest things the city has,
 So kind and *real* they look.
I want to take one home with me
 And ride it up the brook !

The Elevator

MYSELF and I climbed up the stairs,
Ever so many flights and pairs.
We shot down in an Elevator.
Myself came first — I followed later.
It seemed an age until we met ;
We feel disturbed and lonesome yet !



Keep off the Grass

How bare and bald the city is,
Like Grandpa's head ;
No crinkly trees and shining lawns,
But bricks instead.

And when a little grass appears
And tries to grow,
Then, — “ Keep it off ! ” a sign commands ;
They hate it so !



Transplanted

I HAVE a little tree ;

I set it in the yard

And bade it grow, like me.

It smiles, and tries so hard!

But Mildred says it pines away,

And seems more lonely every day.

She says I was unkind

To take it from the wood.

I thought it would not mind,

I thought it understood.

But Mildred says I ought to know

How sad a city tree will grow.

Once I was queer and wild,
And with the trees I grew.
I am a city child, —
I was transplanted, too.
I'll not return my little tree,
Now I have it, and it has me!



City Roofs



City Roofs

UPON the roofs and chimney-pots
The silver Moon looks down,
As she goes sailing through the sky
Above the sleeping town.

It is a funny world she sees,
Spread out so flat and still;
I think she does not even know
I live upon a Hill!

Hollow and hill alike to her
Seem level as a park;
She only sees that fields are green,
But city roofs are dark.

The chimney-pots are black with soot,
The roofs are cold and bare,
And yet they hide such lovely things
Beneath them, here and there!

My pretty room, my sleeping toys, —
If she could only see,
The Moon would know how very blest
A city roof may be!



The World a Mirror

WHEN I come down with smiling face,
The world is such a pleasant place!
'Tis like a mirror, great and wide,
Where I see smiles on every side.

Upon my plate my breakfast food
Smiles up at me and tastes so good!
The clock upon the wall, I think,
Is smiling too, and seems to wink.

The people whom I chance to meet
All smile at me upon the street;
The little dogs wag pleasantly,
As if they meant to smile at me.

At school the children smile and say, —
“Good-morning!” in the nicest way;
And Teacher smiles, so kind and dear,
I love to sit and watch her near.

And then at night when I come in
To Katie’s kitchen, she will grin,
And all her pans and kettles bright
Will chuckle too, — a merry sight!

When I come down with smiling face,
The world is such a pleasant place.
But if I’m cross — Alas! Alas!
The world’s indeed a looking-glass!



Going to the Play

[*Before*]

LAST night I could not sleep,
With thinking of to-day.
How wonderful it is, —
I'm going to the Play!
But oh, the clock does creep!
The minutes are so slow,
While in my newest gown and gloves
I wait the time to go.

[*The Playhouse*]

Oh, what a 'normous lovely house,
All green and gold and lights! And see,

Upon the wall great baskets full
Of little children, just like me!
Oh, what is that great picture-frame?
What is behind the curtain there?
Hark! Do you hear a music sound?
Where is the Play, Papa? Oh, where?

[*The Curtain Rises*]

I heard a Fairy Bell!
Why, it is dark as night!
What can it be? Oh, look and see!
A flare of magic light!
My heart goes pitty-pat —
What makes it flutter so?
See, see! The curtain lifts! —
Oh, — Father, — oh!

[*The Play*]

Flowers and twinkling feet,
Fairies with gauzy wings,
Ladies all rosy-sweet,
A thousand curious things,
All in a rainbow blur,
With music dripping through.
Oh, never let it end,
The lovely Dream-Come-True!

[*After*]

Outside, — oh, what a blinding glare,
And what a roar of horrid noise!
How ugly all the people are,
What dirty little screaming boys!

[36]

I want to stay in Fairyland,
But I suppose it cannot be.
Mother is waiting us at home ;
I shall have bread and milk for tea.



Dressmaking

MY mother buys a piece of cloth
 To make a frock for me,
She cuts it up in little bits,
 Though why I cannot see.

She cuts it all in little bits,
 And then, with might and main,
She sews and sews and sews and sews,
 And sews it up again!



Cooking

OH, Katie's doughnuts are the best
That ever you did see!
She says she could not cook at all
Without the help of me.

She mixes dough so smooth and sweet,
Then she will roll and roll;
But it is not a doughnut yet,
Until I make the hole.

But if I make the hole, I say
They 're *wolly* mine, you see!
But Katie cannot see the joke,
And never will agree.

So when they lie all brown and hot
And tempting in the bowl,
She says to me, "You may have one,
But do not eat the *whole*."



Papa's Calendar

THIS is my Sunday head of hair,
All whirly-twirly curls,
A bow of ribbon tied with care,
Like all the other girls.

And this is how on week-a-days
I start to go to school;
My pigtails plaited evenly,
The parting drawn by rule.

But spite of all that I can do,
Upon a Saturday
This is the way my hair will look
When I come in from play.

[41]

I am my papa's Calendar.
He often will declare
That he can tell what day it is
By looking at my hair.



The Pre-scrip-tion

IT was a very dreadful time
When my Mamma lay ill,
The Nurse went tiptoe through the halls,
The house was sad and still.

The Doctor with his medicines
Came every single day;
He would not let me see Mamma
To kiss her pain away!

But every time he looked so grave —
For dear Mamma was worse;
I knew they could not make her well,
That Doctor and that Nurse.

I sat before the chamber door
 And cried and cried and cried —
I knew that I could cure Mamma
 If I could be inside.

But once I had a splendid thought ;
 Behind the Doctor's back,
To write my own Pre-scrip-tion out,
 And tuck it through the crack !

I made upon a paper sheet
 Round kisses in a shower,
And wrote — “ A kiss for my Mamma ;
 Please take one every hour.”

And from that very time, of course,
 My dear Mamma grew well.
The Doctor thinks it was his pills,
 And I shall never tell !

The Nicest Story

I 'M going to write a story,
The bestest ever told —
The kind that little chil'ren like,
Jus' my years old.

There 's crockendiles 'n' fairies,
'N' chil'ren in a shoe,
'N' animals who talk aloud,
'N' a Princess, too!

There 's dragons on the first page,
'N' giants all the way;
'N' it's going on forever,
Forever and a day.



The nicest tales do finish,
 'N' that is always sad.
But this will have no ending, —
 Oh, are n't you very glad?

I'll write, and write, and write it,
 'N' then you'll read and read.
Oh, *that's* the nicest story,
 The kind that chil'ren need.



Whither Away?

OH, Ann! How you surprise me! I'm not ready for
to go;

I cannot start for Africay before a week or so.

You make me very nervous. Oh, what a thing to
say! —

“Hurrah! We'll take a journey! We're off for
Africay!”

Oh, Ann! You are so suddent, — you take away my
breath!

In Africay there's cannibuls, who scare you 'most to
death!

'N' I've got on my apun, 'n' my second bestest hat;
I could n't go to Africay, so many miles, in *that*!

Oh, Ann! We 're not pervisioned for so horrid long
a trip;

I 've only half a doughnut an' a barley-candy ship.
'N' Fido must have dog-bread 'n' a bone for ev'ry
day, —

We 'll starve upon the journey on the way to Africay!

Oh, Ann! Wait half a minute! I can't leave my doll
behind;

There's no one who can dress her, there's no one
she will mind.

I must say good-by to Mother, I must do to-mor-
row's sum,

Oh, I must water first my pot of pink geranium.

Oh, Ann! What are you doing? You go too scorch-
ing, Ann!

We each must have a parasol, a camel, an' a fan;

We cannot go without them. Let's wait another day!

Whoa! Stop! Or I'll let go before we get to Africay!



Mother's Necklace

MOTHER has a precious necklace,
 “Finer than a Princess wears.”
She is prouder of her jewels
 Than an Empress, she declares.

This is not a party necklace,
 And it is not worn for show ;
But she does not lock it safely
 In a treasure chest, oh no !

Mother does not wear it often
 On the street, nor out to tea ;
But she loves to feel it clinging
 Round her in the nursery.

[50]

Neither diamonds nor rubies,
Amethysts nor snowy pearls
Make the necklace : Mother's jewels
Linked together are three —
(Now what do you suppose ?)



Rainy Day

SNUG indoors, all warm and dry,
I watch the people hurry by.
Wet and weary, to and fro,
Through the dripping rain they go;
Draggled skirts and muddy feet, —
No one now is nice and neat.
Coats turned up and hats turned down,
On each face an ugly frown.
Every one looks cross and sad;
I should think they would be glad
They had nobody to say, —
“You must not go out to-day.”
I suppose they ’d like to be
Snug and warm indoors, like me.

Oh, how I should like to play
In the nice wet rain all day!
I should like to paddle 'round
On the squishy, soaky ground,
Where the mud is good and thick;
I would stir it with a stick.
And the running gutters — look!
Each one is a lovely brook!
What a dreadful waste it is,
Shut indoors a day like this.

Mothers are afraid of wet,
And they always fuss and fret.
But these people in the street
Tramp along with soaking feet.
Little children, boys and girls,
Ah! What dresses! Oh! What curls!

Perhaps they have no one to care
For their feathers and their hair,
No dear fussy one to say, —
“You must not go out to-day.”

That may be why they are sad.
Indeed, indeed, I should be glad!



Rainy-Day Friend

I HAVE a friend, the nicest kind
Upon a rainy day !
He 's always there to comfort me
When I can't go out to play.
He 's patient when I handle him,
He does not whine nor growl,
And if I drop him on the floor
He will not even howl.
He 's never cross and never tired,
He 's never gruff nor glum ;
I understand his merry tales,
Though he is deaf and dumb !

I interrupt him when I like,
He always lets me choose,
He's always ready to repeat,
He never will refuse.
And when at last I'm tired of him
And want to go away,
I put him back upon the shelf,
Where he is glad to stay.



Making Calls

WHEN I go to call with Mother
I sit still in a chair,
While ladies talk about my clothes,
And wonder at my hair.
They ask me silly questions,
And I don't know what to say;
And there isn't anything to eat,
Nor anything to play.

I like to call on Annie,
And go all by myself;
For down in Annie's kitchen
There is a lovely shelf,

Where live big scalloped cookies,
All sugary and sweet,
And peppermints and lozenges,
For Annie's friends to eat.

And there's a dancing Johnny,—
She winds him with a key,
And sets him on the table,
To whirl and hop for me.
She doesn't ask me questions,
Nor talk about my dress,
But Annie knows what children like,
And loves them too, I guess!



The Afternoon Tea

BETTY MCGEE to an afternoon tea
Invited my dolly, my kitty, and me.
“An afternoon tea in the morning at nine,
And please to be prompt in the rain or the shine.
The tea will be cocoa, of course you must know,”
Said Betty to me; and I promised to go.

An afternoon tea is the stylishest thing!
I put on my prettiest necklace and ring,
And Mother's long skirt, with a bonnet of red,
And did up my hair on the top of my head.
I made Dolly sweet in a new kimono,
And dressed Kitty up in her very best bow.

Then I took Sister's card-case, with cards for us
three, —

I know what to do at an afternoon tea!

But what do you think? When the morning had
come,

And we asked if Miss Betty McGee was at home,
They giggled and said she "had gone out to play;
She must have forgotten that this was her day."

Forgotten her guests, though the clock pointed nine,
And we were all ready for rain or for shine!

Forgotten the cocoa, forgotten it all,

While she was unstylishly playing at ball!

"Please tell her," said I, in my haughtiest way,

"It was very bad form!" Then we bade them good-
day.

And that was the end of the afternoon tea

For poor little Dolly and Kitty and me.

Injustice

I WAS a wicked, naughty girl
They very sternly said ;
Because I stamped upon the floor,
They sent me off to bed.

But after that they stood and talked
Below me in the hall,
Then,— “Mother, did you stamp them both ?”
I heard my Papa call.

I don't know *what* my Mother stamped.
She 'fessed “I did !” so gay.
And do you think they punished her ?
They took her to the play !

Points of View

I

I'm thankful for so many things,
 'T is hard to name them all :
I'm glad that I am not grown up,
 But still am nice and small.

I'm thankful that I live to-day,
 And not long, long ago
Before my dear Mama was born,
 And all the friends I know.

I'm thankful for my little pets,
 For every doll and toy.
And oh! I'm glad to be a girl,
 And not a horrid boy!

Points of View

11

I'm thankful that it does n't rain,
So I can go and play.
I'm thankful that I'm growing big,
And bigger every day.

I'm thankful for a holiday,
For football, dogs, and skates ;
For candy and all sorts of things ;
For our United States !

I'm thankful for my rubber boots,
And that my hair won't curl.
And oh ! I'm thankful every day
That I am not a girl !

Washington's Birthday

WHEN little George was born,
I wonder
If anybody blew a horn,
Or yelled like thunder?

Did anybody start
The bells to ringing?
Did everybody's heart
Go singing, singing?

Did George's mother know
How great and glorious
Her little boy would grow,
Hero victorious?

[64]

The future General then
Was helpless lying,
The wonder of all men,
A baby crying !



Fourth of July

THE sooner you wake on the Fourth of July,

The more patriotic you are.

So Mollie and Robbie and Tommy and I

Are rousing Papa and Mama.

Hurrah, hurrah! Papa and Mama!

It's late; it's a quarter past four!

But we are true patriots out on the wall,

We've been up for an hour or more.

Who makes the most noise on the Fourth of July

Is the most patriotickest man.

So Mollie and Robbie and Tommy and I

Are working as hard as we can.

Hurrah, hurrah! Papa and Mama!

We blow on the comb and the horn,
We beat on the dish-pan and flourish the bell,
To honor this glorious morn.

The louder you scream on the Fourth of July,
The more patriotic you grow.

So Mollie and Robbie and Tommy and I
Are shouting as hard as we know.

Hurrah, hurrah! Papa and Mama!

Why don't you come out and begin?
We're ashamed, when the world is so noisy without,
That the house is so quiet within.

We know what it means on the Fourth of July,
All the hubbub and racket and noise.

So Mollie and Robbie and Tommy and I
Will tell all the girls and the boys.

Hurrah, hurrah! Papa and Mama!

We learned all the story from you,
“Independence,” and “Glory,” “The Flag of the
Free.”

But why don't you celebrate, too?



A Song of Saturdays

SING a song of Saturdays;
Band of fifty-two,
Joining hands about the year,
What a merry crew !
How they make the hours dance !
How they shout with glee !
Yes, the happy Saturday
Is the day for me.

Sing a song of Saturdays ;
Pearls upon a chain
Hung about the New Year's neck
When she comes again.

All among the other beads
Pink and blue and grey,
How we love the golden gleam
Of a Saturday.

Sing a song of Saturdays ;
Roses in a wreath,
Fifty-two so big and bright —
Who would look beneath ?
Other days may be as green,
Others bloom as fair,
Yet a single Saturday
We could never spare.

Sing a song of Saturdays ;
Rests along a road.
Here we halt to take a breath,
Ease the weary load.

[70]

Ho! Another milestone passed,
Towards the goal we seek;
Then refreshed we travel on
For another week.



A Penny to Spend

IT 's very hard to spend a penny,
The kinds of candy are so many.
They all look nice and fat and sweet,
The temptingest of things to eat !

But oh ! you feel so rich and grand
To hold the penny in your hand,
And think that red, or pink, or brown —
Why, *any one* could be your own !

But how can anybody choose,
And all the other chances lose ?
It 's very hard to spend a penny,
I almost wish I had n't any !

The Sandman

How the dreadful storm is howling!
When the Sandman comes a-prowling
Through the shadows growing black,
With his bag upon his back,
With his hand all filled with sand
Ready for the children's eyes, —
S'pose he had a great surprise.
As he pauses at the door,
S'pose the wind should give a *r-o-a-r-r!*
S'pose the wind it blew and blew,
Till the sand straight upward flew
Into his old eyes instead.
Should we have to go to bed
Just the same? Oh no, oh no!

But for his soft step behind us,
And his yellow sand to blind us,
We could keep awake and smile
Like the grown-ups, all the while.
We could romp and read and play
All night long, until the day.

Bad old Sandman,
Mad old Sandman!
Blow, Wind, blow!
Whisk the yellow, stinging sand
From his hand ;
Dash it in his eyes to-night,
Blind his peeping, peering sight,
So he cannot see
Us three,
Bob and Belle and me.

Oh no, oh no !
Ha-hum ! Hi-ho !
Bob has fists in both his eyes,
Belle is trying to look wise,
Yawning like a crocodile,
Niddy-nodding all the while.
Oh dear ! Oh dear !
Sandman is already here,
For — my eyes — are blurred — and — queer.



Good-night, Dear Sun

GOOD-NIGHT, dear golden Sun, good-night!
How brave your smile has been and bright!
And you have tried so hard all day
To keep the raindrop tears away.

The hours have seemed so sad and long!
And everything has happened wrong.
But when the tears began to rise,
I looked at you and wiped my eyes.

I tried to smile like you and be
A little light for folk to see.
But may to-morrow be more bright.
Good-night, dear golden Sun, good-night!

Wanderlust

WHEN little birds begin to fly
And little bugs to hop,
Oh, then the brook begins to run
So fast it cannot stop.

The syrup in the maples runs
As sweetly as can be,
The red sap races through the twigs
Of every bush and tree.

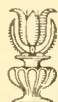
The children run across the grass
(Although it may be wrong!),
While grown-up people watch them run,
And long, and long, and long.

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The sunshine runs about the world,
And everything is gay.
And oh, I have to try so hard
Now, not to run away!



Out of Doors



When Blossoms Blow and Sweet Birds Sing

WHEN blossoms blow and sweet birds sing,
The happy children know 't is spring ;
Then forth their little baskets bring,
And go abroad a-flowering.

By twos and threes from home they stray,
And in the meadows green they play ;
They choose a little Queen of May,
And crown her curls with blossoms gay.

And when at dusk they straggle home,
With flower-laden arms they come,

With roses on their cheeks abloom,
While in their hearts bird carols hum.

And when asleep they lie at night,
Their little springtime dreams are bright,
With birds and buds and joy and light,
And all the wealth of green delight.

And this is why the thought of spring,
When blossoms blow and sweet birds sing,
Such very happiness doth bring,
It sets their hearts a-caroling.





Summer Heart

I'LL wear a cloak of sunshine,
A hat of summer sky,
And not a child in all the world
Shall be so gay as I !

A scarf of scented breezes,
Green grass upon my feet,
I'll dance and sing like anything, —
The world is all so sweet.

I'll fill my heart with sunshine,
I'll fill my pockets, too,
So it will last me all the year ;
And I'll give some to you !

The Lost Playmate

ALL in the pleasant afternoon
I saw a pretty baby moon,
And oh, I loved her silver shine!
She was a little friend of mine.

Through rainy days and sunny weather
I thought we two should play together;
But, then, alas! I did not know
How fast a little moon can grow.

And now when I go out to play
I cannot find the moon all day;
But she has grown so big and bright,
They let her keep awake at night!

Though I may not sit up to see,
In bed she comes and shines at me ;
But oh ! I miss the little moon
Who played there in the afternoon.



Ring around a Rosy

ROUND the rosy Baby
The flowers make a ring ;
Dancing on their slender stalks,
Prettily they sing :

“ Ring around a Rosy !
Baby, Baby blest,
Choose a little Posy,
One you love the best.”

Buttercups and daisies,
Dandelions, too ;
Clover, sweet with honey,
Roses dipped in dew ;

Pink and white and yellow,
Smiling for his sake ;
Not to hurt their feelings
Which shall Baby take ?

“Ring around a Rosy !”
Flowers short and tall,
Holding out his little arms,
Baby takes you all !



The Deep Hole

I AM digging, digging, digging, just as fast as I can,
I am digging in the sand by the sea ;
For I think that down below,
Where the palms and lions grow,
A little boy is digging up to me.

He is digging, digging, digging, just as fast as he can,
He is digging in the desert hot and dry ;
I can almost hear the sound
Of his shovel in the ground,
And soon we shall be talking, he and I.

I am digging, digging, digging, and the sun is nearly
set,
I am digging, but the bell has rung for tea.

Oh, suppose while I 'm away
The waves come up to play, —
They often do, — how dreadful it would be!

I am digging, digging, digging, and I 'm nearly starved
to death,
But I must fill the hole before I go!
For the waves are creeping near,
And I have an awful fear
That they will drown the little boy below!



The Watchful Light

AFAR beyond the dark I spy
The Lighthouse with his winking eye.
I see him often in the day,
So many, many miles away:
A tall white tower in the south,
Where opens wide the river mouth.
He stands above the roaring sea,
With two big eyes that stare at me.
And all night long he may not sleep,
But still his careful watch must keep;
And so he never dares to close
Both eyes at once, lest he should doze.
Poor sleepy Lighthouse! All alone,
His eyes peep brightly, one by one.

Oh, what would happen, do you think,
If both his watchful eyes should wink?
The ships would wander back and forth,
And I not know the south from north!



Fishes

How very pleasant it must be
For little fishes in the sea !
They never learned to swim at all,
It came to them when they were small.
“Swim out like this !” their mother cried,
“Straight through the water, foam and tide.”
They waved their fins and writhed their scales,
And steered their little rudder-tails.
Already they knew what to do,—
I wish that I could do it too !

I try so hard. I ’m very bold,
Although the water is so cold.
I lift my feet and dare begin,
And then a wave comes rolling in ;

The bottom of the sea is gone,
There 's nothing I can stand upon ;
I wave my arms and legs about,
Oh, how I wink and gasp and shout!
Till some one pulls me out to land,
And leaves me gurgling on the sand.
It is not easy without scales,
Or little fins, or even tails,
To swim like fishes in the sea ;
At least, it 's very hard for me.

And yet it makes me laugh to think
That some fine day I shall not sink,
For I shall learn to swim and dive
As well as any fish alive.
But one could never, never teach
A fish to run along the beach !

Birds

How beautiful are rainbow birds !
How wonderful their wings !
Ah, if I could but know the words
The smallest of them sings !

For surely, when they skim and fly
So far into the blue,
They must learn all about the sky,
And further wonders, too.

The birds are surely very dear
To baby cherubs there,
Who coax the little strangers near
And give them tender care.

I think their chubby hands they hold
For birdikins to rest ;
Then close the pretty things they fold,
And stroke each feathered breast.

The birds would tell me if they might
What baby cherubs play,
And whether they have dreams at night,
And lessons in the day.

And whether they look down to see
The children far below,
And send a loving thought to me,—
If I could only know !

O lovely little brother birds,
How wonderful your wings !
Oh, teach me how to know the words
The smallest of you sings.

The Morning Glory

O LITTLE Morning Glory,
Why do you flutter so?
You strain upon your tethering chain
As if you longed to go.
As if you longed to fly away
Beyond this garden fair;
Where is it that you long to be,
O Morning Glory, where?

*“ Alas, alas ! I cannot see ;
But far and far away,
I know a child heart longs for me
This sultry summer day.*

*There is a wistful baby face,
A small beseeching hand;
And no one in that sorry place
Can see or understand."*

O little Morning Glory,
How can you wish to leave?
See, all your pretty friends are here,
And think how we should grieve!
How green and cool the garden shade,
The air how fresh and sweet!
And you would leave it all to fade
In some vile city street!

*"Alas! The little child is pale,
His baby hands how weak!
How gladly would he smile on me
And press me to his cheek!"*

*And I — how gladly would I give,
To feel that baby's kiss,
The little day I have to live,
My world of garden bliss !”*



The Runaway

STOP, stop! Oh, stop the Runaway!

He gallops through the town,
And if you do not clear the way
He's like to run you down!

The reins are dragging at his heels,
He shakes his curly mane,
The village cart is far behind,
Tipped over in the lane.

Stop, stop! Oh, stop the Runaway,
And lead him to his stall!
A little lump of sugar, Sir,
Is what he needs, that's all.

The Steeple

I CLIMBED up in the steeple
And I looked down, down,
On the funny little people
In the funny little town.

The river was a ribbon
That twisted through the green;
The weary hill above it
Was nowhere to be seen.

The houses were like volumes
A careless child lays flat;
I could not see the farmer's boy,
But just a moving hat.

And then I spied my Mother,
A tiny speck below,
Among the garden posies
Go walking to and fro.

I called, — she did not hear me.
I waved, — she did not see.
She was so busy with the buds
She had forgotten me!

She seemed so far and foreign,
I felt so far and small!
And then, because of raining tears,
I could not see at all.

And so I left the steeple
And clambered down, down,
To the dear, kind people
In the dear, kind town.

Over the Wall

BEYOND the garden is a wall,
As high as high can be ;
And what is on the other side,
I cannot reach to see.

My kitten nimbly climbs the pole
Away up in the air,
Where she can see beyond the wall
And all that happens there.

Oh, then her eyes grow big and round,
Surprised almost to death ;
Her whiskers twitch, she waves her tail,
And then I hold my breath.

“Oh, Kitten, tell me what you see!”

I whisper in her ear ;
But Kitty never says a word,
Pretending not to hear.

What wonders live beyond the wall ?

I long and long to know !
But since the kitten will not tell,
I must make haste to grow.



Reaction

IT was a very pleasant thing
To go a-sliding in the spring ;
Not on a cold and icy hill,
But in the orchard green and still.

The board was just as smooth as glass,
And at the foot was soft green grass.
A body slips and laughs and slips, —
I guess I made a hundred trips !

But when the luncheon hour came,
I told Mama the jolly game.
She sighed and bade me “turn around,”
And then a dreadful tear she found !

How could one such a thing foresee?
The board seemed smooth as smooth could be.
I think it was n't hardly fair
To blame me for the splinter there.

The world is hard upon a boy ;
There seems a woe for every joy.
And afterwards I always find
A splinter left a tear behind !



Devotion

How fast you grow, dear little Rose!

What is it that you seek?

“I hope to reach and kiss— who knows? —
The Baby’s dimpled cheek.”

How fast you grow, dear Buttercup!

What do you long to win?

“I hope to hold my petals up
And gild the Baby’s chin.”

How fast you grow, sweet Clover-stalk!

And why a-tiptoe stand?

“When Baby takes his morning walk,
I hope to touch his hand.”

How lazily you grow, green grass,
While others climb above !
“I lay me soft for him to pass ;
The Baby’s feet I love.”



Fireflies

DEWY fresh the garden lies,
Fragrant in the summer dark.
All around are mysteries —
Lo! a sudden spark.

Now the Fairies revel there,
Safely veiled from mortal sight;
See, their rockets pierce the air,
Little bursts of light.

Now they fall in golden showers,
Shoot the shadows through and through.
Oh, to see among the flowers
What the Fairies do!

The Little House

THROUGH all the happy summertime
The Little House was ours,
Hidden away among the trees,
With neighbor birds and flowers;

Built like a toy house, small and queer,
Of timbers rough and brown,
With nothing very pretty there,
Like this other house in town.

But oh! we loved the Little House
A thousand-ten times more!
We loved the tiny window-panes,
The funny swinging door.

And all day long we played and played
Bareheaded in the sun,
But always sought the Little House
When playing time was done.

And patiently among the trees
It waited all the while,
And seemed to greet us eagerly,
To meet us with a smile.

But now, with summer birds and flowers,
We too have gone away.
The Little House among the pines
Is empty all the day.

Think,— how the trees are stiff and bare,
And how the cold winds blow
About the lonely Little House
All smothered in the snow.

Think,—how the door is buried deep,
The windows scarcely see,
And no one drives away the crows
Who gossip jeeringly.

And does the Little House believe
The mocking words they say?
Does it stand broken-hearted there,
Deserted day by day?

Dear Little House among the pines,
'T is lonely time for you.
But far away we wait and long,
For we are lonely, too!



Story Rhymes





The Mermaid

ONCE there lived a fair Mermaiden,
Far, far down in a cave of the sea ;
Bright her lips as the scarlet coral,
And her hair was green as could be.
Like a fish she swam through the water ;
Like a fish a tail she wore ;
And she loved a human baby
Playing on the sandy shore.

Filled with joy, the fair Mermaiden
Sang to him in the sweetest tone, —
“ Little Earth-Child, will you love me ?
Will you come to be my own ? ”

But the child heard not her singing
Mid the roaring of the waves,
Saw no lovely Mermaid beckon
To the happy coral caves.

Sadly swam the fair Mermaiden
Back again to her lonely home,
Where she wept a sea-maid's tear-drops, —
Pearls as bright as ocean foam.
One white pearl in a shell was hidden,
Which a billow bore to land,
Tossed it where the child was playing,
Close beside his careless hand.



Fate

THERE was a little well-bred man, —
Of gingerbread was he ;
He had two^d bright, black, currant eyes,
Expressive as could be.

He fell in love with the sugar cat
Beside him on the shelf ;
But he had no mouth and he could not speak, —
He was quite beside himself !

She was a pretty, gentle puss,
Who cocked her sugar ear,
And longed and waited eagerly
Some tender word to hear.

His currant orbs were full of love,
You could see with half an eye ;
But alas ! the sugar cat was blind,
Nor guessed that he was nigh.

And so he never told his love,
And so she never knew,
But as he leaned against the wall
Bowed down with grief he grew.

Until he fell into a heap,
And crumbled quite away ;
But the sugar cat's poor longing heart
Grew harder every day.



The Joke

A LITTLE Dandelion was blooming in the grass,
When a merry buccaneering Bee rumbumbling
chanced to pass.

“I know a funny story, and I tell it very well ;
Ha ha !” he said. “Just listen to the tale I have to
tell !”

She was a little English Dandelion.

He buzzed the funny story in Dandelion’s ear ;
She listened very gravely, she stood tiptoe to hear,
She never smiled, but said, “How odd ! There is no
joke to me.

Oh, is it really funny ? Pray explain, dear Mr. Bee.”

She was a little English Dandelion.

But with a merry bumble the Bee had buzzed away,
And so she stood and thought and thought until her
hair was gray.

She mused till it was white as snow, and she was very
old,

But still she could not see the joke that Mr. Bee had
told.

She was a little English Dandelion.

But after many, many days, when summer-time was
past,

The Dandelion gasped and smiled. She saw the joke
at last !

She laughed and laughed, she shook and shook, she
bent and held her side,

And laughed her hoary head right off. So of the joke
she died, —

She was a little English Dandelion.

The Christmas Stocking

I WAS a stocking like the rest, —
Perhaps a little longer,
And somewhat bigger round and round,
And made a trifle stronger.

For little Mary chose me out
Among a dozen others
Who lay around me, neatly rolled,
My brown and woolly brothers.

But now, how far away they seem!
The difference is shocking
Between an ordinary sock
And an honored Christmas stocking!

For Mary did not put me on,
But—empty, limp, and lonely
She hung me by the chimney-piece
On Christmas Eve— me only!

And oh! Upon that glorious night
What wondrous things befell,
Who laughing down the chimney came,
I do not dare to tell!

Who filled me with a hundred things
I never held before —
Candy and balls and dolls and toys,
Still more, and more, and more!

Until I had no shape at all,
But dangled from the peg
A bulgy, knobby thing— the least
Like Mary's chubby leg.

Then, when the Christmas morning came,
How Mary laughed and danced,
And how she hugged and handled me,
And how we hopped and pranced !

Ah ! I can never be the same,
Though Mary has forgotten,
And wears me into dreadful holes,
So I am darned with cotton.

And though my sole is worn and old,
My end approaching fast,
I am the Christmas stocking still,
While any stitches last.



The Calm Cannon Cracker

THERE WAS ONCE a Cannon Cracker,
And he said, — “ Now you shall see,
I will not lose my temper,
They cannot anger me !

“ No matter how they treat me,
Or how they may abuse,
I will not fly to pieces,
Like the others ; *I refuse !*”

He waited and he waited,
Till there came a dreadful Day ;
They tore him from his brothers,
And took him far away.

They felt him and they squeezed him,—
He never made a sound,
Though he heard the other Crackers
Exploding all around.

Until they tried a mean trick,
Most mean and underhand !
A thing no gallant Cracker
Of any fire could stand.

For when they found to tease him
No method would avail,
They with a fuse all burning
Set fire to his tail !

Oh, then he lost his temper,
And spluttered out his worst.
He flew into a passion,
And with a "*Bang*," — he burst !

The Valentine

SAID the little Black Cat,
 “I will write a Valentine,
And send it to Miss Pussy
 And ask her to be mine.”

So he went out in the rain,
 And he sought that night
For a little new leaf
 Upon which to write.

But the trees stood bare
 In the ice and snow,
And none of the leaves
 Had begun to grow.

The little Black Cat
Stood under a tree,
And he wept aloud
“ Oh, dearie me ! ”

Then over his head
He heard a sound,
And what do you think
The Black Cat found? ♦

A gray little pussy
Sat on each spot
All over the tree
Where the leaves were not !

“ O dear little Pussies,”
The Black Cat said ;

“I’ll sing my verses
To you instead.”

And all night long,
’Neath the willow tree,
The Black Cat warbled
His melody.

But poor Miss Pussy
Had never a line
From the little Black Cat,
Her Valentine!



The Drop of Water and the Grain of Sand

SAID the little drop of water to the little grain of
sand,

“Do you hear what they are saying? Do you really
understand?

We ‘make the mighty ocean and the pleasant land,’
they say.

We are a famous couple — let’s work no more to-
day!”

So down they sat together and sang upon the sand,

“We’ll make no mighty ocean, we’ll make no pleas-
ant land!”

The other drops of water beheld what they had
done —
They whispered to the sand-grains and beckoned to
the sun.

The sun gazed, fierce and angry, upon the wicked pair,
And dried the drop of water, which vanished into air.
Then came a laughing wavelet, as frisky as could be,
And washed the little sand-grain away into the sea.

But still the sea was mighty, with just as loud a roar,
And still the land was pleasant, as it had been before ;
For no one drop of water and no one grain of sand
Can make or mar the ocean nor change the pleasant
land.



Examination Day

I KNEW it was not safe to wait; and so the night before,
I packed my thoughts into a bag, and hurried to the
shore.

I got into the birch canoe and paddled far away,
Until I came to Question Land, where all the An-
swers stay.

I found a funny little spring, and there I stopped and
filled

A bottle full of magic ink, which blotted where it
spilled.

And when you dip a pen in that your thoughts come
thick and fast,

You cannot answer stupidly so long as it shall last.

And next I wandered through the wood where magic
pencils grow

Upon the monster wisdom-trees; I picked a score
or so.

One draws out lovely maps for you; one spells the
hardest words;

And one remembers dates; and others, names of
flowers and birds.

And then I reached the wonder-house, with roof of
magic slate;

I took one down, all bound in wood, and oh! my joy
was great;

For problems in arithmetic upon it scrawled in white
Would accurately prove themselves all finished to
your sight!

I took some light refreshment from a salad that I found,
Of juicy dictionary leaves which thickly grew around.
And then I knew this magic food had charmed my
tripping tongue ;
Whatever question might be asked, it could not an-
swer wrong.

So then I took my bag of thoughts which I had
brought with care,
And emptied them upon the shore, to leave them
useless there.
But in the bag I packed instead the pencils and the ink,
And last of all the magic slate. So now I need not
think !
I paddled in my bark canoe back home across the bay,
And landed on the morning of Examination Day.

Suggestions to Travelers

ONE should be kind, considerate,
And tactful and polite,
To all the poor wild animals
One meets by day or night.

Avoid all personalities :

Don't praise "continued tales"
When tailless Rabbits are about :
Don't sing to Snakes in scales.

Nor is it in the best of taste

To mention dentists' bills
To Ostriches who have no teeth :
Beware, too, "plumes" and "quills."

To talk of cleaning spots away
Would not be very kind,
Were there a Leopard listening
Before you or behind.

Giraffes are very sensitive
About their necks, folk say :
Best not refer to collars, stocks,
Or mere décolleté.

It would not be at all correct
(It must be very clear)
To mention lengthy noses
When an Elephant was near.

To speak of rugs or fur-lined coats
Would be a tactless thing,

If somewhere in society
A Bear were listening.

Don't shock the Camel, crying "Humph!"
Don't give the Lion pain
By speaking very thoughtlessly
About the "roaring main."

One cannot try too carefully
To be polite alway :
For animals are sensitive,
And blunders do not "pay."



The Dictionary

THE lonesome Dictionary sighed, —

“ Alas ! and woe is me.

Why am I not as popular

As other volumes be ?

“ Lo, all the culture of the world

Within my covers lies ;

I am a library complete,

One need but use his eyes ;

“ The ‘ six best sellers ’ of the day,

The favorites of old, —

One need but choose the ready words

My seemly covers hold.

“What scope! Potential story-stuff,
As yet unused, unheard.
Here authors can find themes enough,
Can cull them, word by word.

“And I am like no other book,
No jumbled mess you find;
But alphabetic sequence here,
No two words of a kind!

“What use in giving libraries?
Let generous souls provide
A Dictionary for each town,
No need of books beside.”

The lonesome Dictionary ceased,
The library was still:
And readers read the other books,
As foolish readers will.

Little Thoughts



Bees in the Fire

THE hearth is bright with dancing light,
The fire is comforting and warm ;
The fiery sparks fly to and fro,
Like golden bees they swarm.
Up, up the chimney see them come,
And vanish quite away.
Oh, hark ! They gently buzz and hum,
As on a summer day.

What seeks each bee so eagerly,
As he goes flitting to and fro ?
Perhaps some gorgeous, flaming flower,
Such bees as these may know.

Out darts a fiery fellow now,
 With sparkling golden wings.
Oh, fie! he lit upon my hand,—
 How sharp the creature stings!



Ships

THE ships on the sea
Are sailing so free,
 From countries afar
 'Neath a different star,
Where wonderful, beautiful things must be.
They come and they go,
They pass to and fro,
Laden with treasures stowed snugly below ;
Rich silver and gold,
Bright jewels untold,
But never a ship has a gift for me !

The clouds in the sky
Float lazily by,

Like ships so bright,
With canvas white ;
But whence do they hail is the mystery.
They come and they go,
They sail to and fro,
Freighted with fancies for people below.
Oh, better than gold
Are the treasures they hold,
For each of the clouds has a gift for me !



Kindred

I WANDER through the woodland ways,
And not a whispered sound,
No shudder in the leaves, betrays
The quivering life around.

And yet I feel the kindred near
In every ambushed shade,
From tree and grass they peep and peer,
Half friendly, half afraid.

I bend above the magic tide ;
But veiled in beryl light
The countless ocean-creatures hide,
With crystal eyes and bright.

The rainbow shapes glide to and fro,
Or gaze in still surprise ;
The wonder-kin I do not know,
Yet feel their curious eyes.

Above, the starry mystery,
With teeming space between ;
I feel its wonders close to me,
Its presences unseen.

As in a childish game, I stand
Blindfolded and alone,
And stumbling reach an eager hand
To kindred all unknown.

Bewildered in the living space
With wistful arms I grope ;
Thrilled by a breath upon my face,
A shadow — and a hope.

Suppose

SUPPOSE no jolly chaps had known
What books the boys like best, —
No Kingsley, Scott, and Stevenson,
No Cooper and the rest.

Suppose the world had never learned
Of Crusoe and his Isle ;
Suppose the clever Robinsons
Had not been wrecked in style.

Suppose King Arthur and his knights,
Don Quixote and the Cid,
Had never had a chronicler
To tell what deeds they did.

Suppose corsair or buccaneer
Were a forgotten word ;
Suppose of Indians and scouts
No boy had ever heard.

Suppose the world was still too young,
Men had not thought of books ;
Suppose there were no libraries,
No cosy reading nooks :

Suppose I had not gone to school
When I was very small,
Suppose I knew no alphabet,
And could not read at all.

Suppose, — it is too horrible,
To think it might be true !
On rainy days and winter nights,
What could a fellow do ?

Riddle

A CURIOUS House where people dwell,
And wonders happen, ill or well.
The door-plate gives the House's name,
Likewise the builder of the same.
You enter if you have a key,
Or something of a scholar be.
You ope the door, and in the hall
A picture greets you, first of all:
A blazoned notice next you view,
The builder's name, the owner's too,
The city where the House was made,
Date when the corner-stone was laid.
And then you find a list enrolled
Of treasures which the House doth hold,

That you may choose what suits your eye,
Or if none please, may pass them by.
And then you swing door after door,
Each numbered next to that before.
From room to room you pass in turn,
And many curious things you learn,
About the people in the House
(But you must keep still as a mouse).
A magic House, sure, it must be,
For all things happen rapidly ;
Behind its doors years pass away,
Though you may but an hour stay.
Perhaps around the world you soar
Before you pass the other door.
Yet when this gate is closed behind,
You have not moved a step, you find !
Your hand may move the House at will,
Carry it far or leave it still.

Though months and years may pass away,
Unchanged the House and inmates stay, —
Your House to sell, or give, or let,
Yours to revisit or forget.



The Book

THE book I love in winter-time is printed black and
white,

A book to read before the fire upon a chilly night.

A tale of high adventuring, a tale of woe and joy,

With many pictures intermixed, — the kind that suit
a boy.

A ship, a cruise, a lad at sea, a purpose to defend,

And everything to come aright before the story's end.

But when the summer-time is here, I love another book,

Not told upon a printed page but gurgled by a brook,

And whispered by the eager pines, and thundered by
the sea,

And gossiped in a dialect by every passing bee.



There is no story in the world which I have ever seen,
To equal Nature's volume, where the leaves are all of
green.

This book is ever open at the most exciting page,
To suit the reader old or young, of any taste or age.
The pictures are in colors fair, the plot is ever new;
However wild or wonderful, you know it all is true.
The book will last a lifetime, an ever faithful friend;
Each summer 't is continued, and it never has an end.



Sunday Thoughts

God must expect me to be good,
Because he curled my hair,
And gave me things to make me neat,
And pretty clothes to wear.

I like my little furry muff;
My hat is lovely, too,
My Sunday frock is fresh and fair,
My gloves are neat and new.

'T is pleasant to be nicely dressed, —
But I must not be vain,
For many better little girls
Have shabby gowns and plain.

It seems so easy to be good
When all one's clothing matches,
I'm sure that wicked thoughts belong
To rags and dirt and patches.

The children who wear horrid clothes
Are not so much to blame
When they are bad, as I should be ;
For me 't would be a shame !



Lights

Who would be a shadow,
 When he might burn bright?
Who would not be kindled
 From the fairest Light?

Some are little lanterns,
 Shining in the dark ;
Some are lamps of glory,
 Some are but a spark.

Some are blessed beacons
 On the dangerous way ;
Some are idle glow-worms,
 Leading folk astray.

Some like tiny tapers
Flickeringly shine,
Yet they may be nearest
To a holy shrine.

O Thou Light effulgent,
O Thou Holy One,
Ever radiant, glorious,
All-illuming Sun,

May I, weak and feeble,
Small though I may be,
Prove a little candle
Kindled unto Thee.



Shepherds' Carol

A LITTLE Lamb is born to-night,
Weak and helpless, pure and white.
All among the straw they laid him,
And an humble nest they made him, —
The little holy Lamb.

Who shall tell what this may be?
Light about his head we see!
All among the cattle lying,
Lo, they kneel in wonder eyeing
The little holy Lamb.

“Peace on earth, good-will he brings!”
Listen! 'T is an angel sings!

Shepherds, cast your staves before him,
Bending on your knees adore him,—
The little holy Lamb.



Nonsense



Metamorphoses

THE SHAMPOODLE

THERE once was a dear little Poodle,
Who bore the sweet name Yankee Doodle.
 He was charming to view,
 Till he took a shampoo,
Then he changed to an ugly Shampooole.

THE IDOL

There once was a doll fair and grand,
Who was shipwrecked near Enderby Land.
 The savages found her
 And worshiped around her ;
The Doll became Idol off-hand.

THE TEDDY BEAR

There once was a small Teddy Bear,
Who lost all his beautiful hair.

Then he said, "Since I'm bald,
I must bear to be called
Henceforward a mere Teddy Bare."

THE COWARD

There once was a peaceable Cow,
Who cuddled down under a bough.

But a boy came in view,
And she fled with a "moo!"
The cow turned a Coward, I vow!

THE GNAT

There once was a natty young Gnat,
Who crept 'neath the brim of my hat.
 But I suddenly sneezed,
 And the poor Gnat was squeezed
Un-gnatural, lifeless and flat.

THE DOE

There once was a naughty young Doe,
Whose parents forbade her to go;
 But she strayed through the wood,
 Till she met Robin Hood;
She then became pasty of dough.

THE PEACH

There once was a Peach on a tree,
The fairest you ever did see.
 But it ripened too fast,
 Till it fell down at last,
And turned to a Squash, — dearie me !

THE HARE

There once was a pretty brown Hare,
Who had such a terrible scare,
 That in one single night
 The Hare became white.
“I shall dye !” she was heard to declare.

THE VANE

There once was a rooster in Maine,
Who grew so exceedingly vain,
 That some of the people
 Set him up on the steeple,
Where he turns in the wind and the rain.



THE STUTTERING TRAIN

There once was a stuttering Train,
Who never could learn to talk plain.
 He said "I choo-choo-choo —"
 What he chose no one knew,
For he never went on to explain.

THE BORE

Oh, what a Metamorphosis!
 For as we see him more,
The thing which was a Teddy Bear
 Becomes a Tedious Bore.

HEREDITY

My Grandma used to spin and reel ;
My Papa spins upon his wheel ;
My Auntie is a spinster gray ;
And I can spin my top all day !

STOP, THIEF!

Ring the Canterbury Bell !
Let the news be put in print, —
Burglar Bee is in a cell,
Caught while robbing from the Mint !

ME AND DANDELION

When Nursie curls and combs my hair,
I fuss because she hurts me so.
The Dandelion makes a fuzz
Because her hair is gone, you know.

BATS

I'm not afraid of Bats, not I,
I love to see them flutter by.
I think the funny little things
Are angel mice who've earned their wings.



Songs Made for Music



Awake

THE morning air is sweet and clear,

Awake!

The day is new, and new the year,

Awake!

With precious gifts in either hand

The early Hours expectant stand,

Awake! Awake! Awake!

Reproachfully they turn to go,

Awake!

Ah, do not let them leave you so,

Awake!

Arise and take the gifts they bear,

They will not come again, beware,

Awake! Awake! Awake!

Autumn Morning

EARLY in the morning time,
When the sun begins to climb,
 First of all
 The birdies small
Begin the day with singing ;

Gaily, sweetly do they sing,
All the Summer, all the Spring ;
 But in Fall
 The birdies small
To southern lands are winging.

Now has Autumn time begun ;
Who will sing to greet the sun

If not all
The children small
Set happy voices ringing?

Children, sing with might and main,
Welcome to the sun again,
Like the call
Of birdies small
When he the day is bringing.



The Runaway Brook

LITTLE Brooklet tripping,
O'er the pebbles skipping,
 Whither do you roam?
Gaily playing,
Further you are straying, —
 Hard you'll find the journey home.

Little Brooklet gliding,
'Mid the mosses hiding,
 Why so shy and still?
Short the day is,
Very long the way is
 From your home upon the hill.

Have you run away, Sir,
All this summer day, Sir?
 Naughty little Brook!
Hark, the River
Watches for you ever,
 Sly and eager is her look.

She will catch and hold you,
Closely will enfold you
 All against your will.
Never after
Will your happy laughter
 Reach your home upon the hill!



The Postman

THE Postman does his duty still
In wind and in rain ;
He clammers up the weary hill,
Then plods down again.

He mounts the steps with hearty gait,
The bell briskly rings ;
And even when he has to wait,
The gay fellow sings.

And when within his bag he bears
A letter for me,
I know the kindly Postman cares,
Is pleased as can be.

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So when his resting-time has come,
And daylight is dim,
I hope the Postman finds at home
A letter for him.



Heroes

Oh, I love the tale of a roaring gale,
A hero like Captain Kidd !
Or of Robin Hood in the fair greenwood,
And the gallant deeds he did.
But their swords are rust and their bones are dust,
And even their graves are hid.

Oh, I love to read of a noble deed,
When Indians bent the bow ;
Of the last brave fight of a Red Cross knight,
In the days of long ago.
But 't is best of all to be young and small,
For now we can live and grow.

Oh, I love a song of the brave and strong,
The Heroes who dared to do ;
But when all is said they are Heroes dead,
And the world is for me and you.
There are foes to fight, there are wrongs to right,
And we may be Heroes too !



The Runaway Snail

ONCE there lived a funny little Snail,
Two short horns, a stubby little tail.
“Oh,” said the Snail to himself one day,
“Let us see what happens if I run away!”

Forth he started, quickly as he could,
Creeping, crawling, through the mossy wood.
“Oh, what a joy it has been to roam!
Surely I must be many miles from my home!”

Then he turned his head and looked around,
What do you think the silly fellow found, —
There was his shell like a pedler’s pack,
He had run away with his house on his back!

The Victory

HARK to the bugle calling to battle !
Horses are neighing, sabres rattle,
Banners are flying, trumpets are crying ;
 Beat, little Drummer, lead us to the fight !
Forward to honor, forward to glory,
Deeds that shall sound in ballad and story !
Liberty calls us, whate'er befalls us, —
 Farewell, our dear ones, fare you well to-night !

Hark to the bugle echoing proudly ;
Victory crowns us, blow trumpets loudly !
Haggard and bleeding, but wounds unheeding,
 Beat, little Drummer, lead us from the fight !

Wave, tattered banner, going before us!
Wave, ragged pennants, fluttering o'er us!
Cheerily singing, good tidings bringing,
Home to our dear ones, marching home to-night!



In Memory of the Soldiers

ROSES rare and lilies fair,
Strew where heroes bold are lying,
They who loved their country dying.
Soldiers brave, their best they gave,
Their blood, their lives, our flag to save.

Bring the best to crown their rest,
There is nothing worthy of them
But the flag that floats above them.
Let it wave o'er every grave,
The flag they nobly died to save.



The Violet

A VIOLET of modest blue
Unseen upon the meadow grew ;
 It was a lovely Violet.
A shepherd maid came dancing by,
With airy step and laughing eye ;
 She sang so near, so very near, — nearer yet !

“Ah!” thought the flower, “were I more fair,
That maid might think me good to wear
 Upon her heart a little space.”
Alas! The maid tripped careless by,
Nor on the blossom turned her eye,
 But dancing crushed the Violet’s pretty face.

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It sank upon the green and died;
“ At her dear feet I die,” it sighed.

Poor lovely little Violet!

From the German of Goethe.



The Rose's Lament

“ALAS! How fast the moments fly!”

The fading Rose sighed in her bower, —

“My fragrance soon is lost forever.”

“Ah no, dear Rose, it shall not die,”

The Poet comforted the flower,

“For in my song it breathes forever.”

From the German.



Twilight

SEE, how the Evening floats gently down,
Spreading her mantle over the town,
Trailing shadows through the meadows,
 Fringe of her gown.

Lo, how she hushes all things asleep,
Lulling the breezes, calming the deep,
With soft fingers soothing lingers
 Near those who weep.

Come, gentle Evening, waft us thy rest,
Pillow our weary heads on thy breast ;
Hither stealing bring thy healing
 Out of the west.

Evening Song

THE little laughing blossoms
Have shut their eyes,
And all the fragrant garden
In slumber lies.
For Mother Night has kissed them,
And blessed them too,
And laid on every flower-bed
A quilt of dew.

The little birds are sleeping
In every tree,
And all the world is weary,
Like you and me.

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Then let each tired creature
Go home to rest ;
For Mother Night is calling,
And she knows best.



The Fairy Carnival

COME, Fairies bright,
Now is the Midsummer Night;
 Here on the green
 Circle our Queen;
Dance, dance with delight!
Come, come away,
Merrily frolic and play,
 Frisk till we hear
 Shrill Chanticleer
Awakening mortals to day.

Flit, flit, gauzy of wing,
Tread in the mystical ring,

Light, light, pressing the grass,
With silvery feet we pass ;
Sweet, sweet, sing we a song,
Breeze, bear its echoes along,
Soft, soft, secret we keep,
Lest mortals awake from sleep.

Join hands around,
Circle the magical ground ;
Here on the green
Circle the Queen ;
Let merry madness abound.

Tune up your fiddles, ye Crickets, more sprightly ;
Skip, little Grasshoppers, skip with us lightly ;
Twinkle your lanterns, you Glow-Worms, more
brightly ;
Wheel, Fairies, wheel !

Blow, gentle Zephyrs, with odors entrancing,
Waken the flowers and set them to dancing,
Sing with us, spring with us, ring in the Fairy reel.

Hush! Hark! Morning is near!
Hark, hark! the shrill Chanticleer!

“Cock-a-doodle-doo!”

Fays, fays, now disappear!



The Dream

FROM the land of mystery
Came a fairy Dream to me ;
Gauzy and rosy, bright and dear,
Sweetly she lingered near.
Kind were her eyes, I thought she smiled ;
 One tender word I spoke.
Ah! ah! Where was the lovely child?
 She fled, and I awoke!
 Sweet Dream, farewell!

Oft I climb the hill of sleep,
Where the shadow-people keep,
Seeking my Dream who would not bide,
Dearer than all beside.

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Sometimes I feel that she is near,

Sometimes I almost see.

Ah! ah! Why does she seem to fear?

She comes no more to me.

Sweet Dream, farewell!



Good-Night

FARE thee well, farewell until the morning;
O'er us fall the curtains of the night.
Golden day will soon be dawning,
Bringing playtime glad and bright.
Sleep, oh sleep!

Fare thee well, may gentle angels bless thee,
Bending o'er thy darling curly head.
May their holy lips caress thee
In thy snowy little bed.
Sleep, oh sleep!

Fare thee well, the little dreams are stealing
Down the sky and at your window wait,

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Fairy wands your eyes are sealing,
Lo, the hour is growing late.
Sleep, oh sleep !



A Blessing

*Now may the Holy Christ-Child
Who came on Christmas Day,
The gentle Friend and Brother
Who smiles upon your play,
Bless all the little children,
However far away.*



The Riverside Press

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